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COUNTRY GDR

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THE GDR INLAND WATER-TRANSPORT SYSTEM

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The following abbreviations are used frequently in this report:

DSU -- Deutscher Schiffahrts-und Umschlags Betrieb, GDR Water-Transport and Transshipping Enterprise

DSRK -- Deutsche Schiffs-Revision und Klassifikation, GDR Ship Inspection and Classification Office

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

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Present State of Inland Fleet

The GDR inland waterway fleet includes the following tonnage:

Vessel Disposition	Date of GDR Registry	Barges		Self-Propelled Vessels		Total	
		Tonnage	No	Tonnage	No	Tonnage	No
In operable condition	22 Jan 54*	633,700	--	28,200	--	661,900	--
	1 Jun 53**	--	--	--	--	650,000	--
Not in operable condition	22 Jan 54	69,000	--	2,800	--	71,800	--
Rented out for storage	22 Jan 54	15,500	--	500	--	16,000	--
Under repair by crew on day of survey	22 Jan 54	1,500	--	2,900	--	4,400	--
In repair yard on day of survey	22 Jan 54	59,300	--	4,700	--	64,000	--
Released to West Berlin and West Germany	22 Jan 54	42,000	--	4,900	--	46,900	--
Private ownership	1 Jun 53	658,870	1,688	30,576	190	689,446	1,878
People-Owned	1 Jun 53	304,071	501	36,300	89	340,371	590
Total	1 Jun 53	962,941	2,189	66,876	279	1,029,817	2,468
	22 Jan 54	821,000	--	44,000	--	865,000	--

* All information in this table dated 22 January 1954 is from Source 2.

** All information in this table dated 1 June 1953 is from Source 1.

The people-owned share of the total fleet is still relatively small, i.e., less than 30 percent. However, it includes the best vessels. Vessels of the second or poorer class were not transferred to the people-owned status. The people-owned vessels enjoy priority for repairs and material supply. They are also given the most profitable hauls. The privately owned fleet is obsolescent. Repair costs force the ship owner to take a loan from the investment bank, which puts him under the complete control of the [redacted]. Of the total tonnage registered as of 1 June 1953, 130,000 tons are to be scrapped an an average of 25,000 tons are continually in repair.(1)

Fleet Requirements for 1954

The 1954 transportation plan calls for 13.7 million tons of cargo to be carried on inland water-transport vessels. During January and February 1954, the GDR inland fleet carried 340,000 tons, and the expected performance for March is 360,000 tons. This leaves a balance of 13 million tons for the remainder of the year. The first-quarter plan calls for the transportation on inland waterways of 3,040,000 tons, but only 700,000 tons are expected actually to be carried during that period, leaving a plan deficit of 2,340,000 tons. Of this figure, about one million tons of freight will have been transported by other means or will no longer be available, leaving 1,340,000 tons as backlog from the first quarter 1954 and, altogether, a total of 12 million tons of freight to be carried between 1 April and 31 December 1954.

To carry this tonnage, the GDR needs the following bottoms:

Second quarter -- 3.9 million tons are to be transported. If 70 percent of the vessels' capacity is used, the averaging [illegible] trips per month per vessel, a fleet of 688,000 tons is needed.

Third quarter -- 4 million tons. Using 70 percent of the vessels' capacity, and averaging 2.8 trips per month per vessel, a fleet of 682,000 tons is needed.

Fourth quarter -- 4.1 million tons. Using 70 percent of the vessels' capacity, and averaging 2.8 trips per month per vessel, a fleet of 697,000 tons is needed.

Using the same coefficient [as used in the 1954 plan calculations] of 70 percent of vessel utilization, the 1953 plan (1.2 million tons per month) required 2.6 trips per month per vessel (based on 10 navigable months) to fulfill the plan. On long hauls (e.g., Mecklenburg - Sachsen) more than 20 days are used. This permits only 1.5 trips per month. These long hauls, however, are financially and ton-kilometer-wise the most profitable. To reach a 2.6-trip-frequency figure and the resulting ton-kilometer figure, short hauls must be resorted to. This explains the short-haul shuttle runs which the DSU enterprises have been carrying out to increase the ton-kilometer performance (hauling rubble, construction material, coal, etc.). Since, however, the loading and unloading time for these hauls is very high, the [1953] ton-kilometer plan was not expected to be fulfilled.

During the navigable season, operations go on around the clock. Loading, unloading, and trips are made by day and night, on weekdays, Sundays, and holidays. This system of full exploitation of the human and material resources has caused and will continue to cause over exertion, performance decrease, work refusals, and resistance.(1)

During 1954, the development of the GDR inland-waterway fleet is expected to be as follows:

	First Quarter (tons)	Second Quarter (tons)	Third Quarter (tons)	Fourth Quarter (tons)	Total
Operating fleet as of 22 January 1954	--	--	--	--	661,900
To be sent to shipyards	50,000	65,000	50,000	40,000	-205,000
To be received from shipyards	70,000	75,000	60,000	50,000	+255,000

	First Quarter (tons)	Second Quarter (tons)	Third Quarter (tons)	Fourth Quarter (tons)	Total
To be scrapped	--	--	--	--	- 5,000
New construction	--	--	--	--	+ 3,000
Total at end of 1954	--	--	--	--	709,900

It should be noted that while the tonnage to be scrapped comes from the nonusable fleet, it is assumed that a similar tonnage will be lost from the fleet in operating condition to the nonusable category. Funds should be provided to prevent the loss of vessels in operating condition to exceed the tonnage to be scrapped.

The [Stettiner] Haff and [Greifswalder] Bodden fleets are decreasing. According to information of the DSHK, this fleet consisted at the beginning of 1953 of 205,000 tons and at the beginning of 1954, of 164,000 tons, a loss of 41,000 tons. A further loss of 20,000 tons may be expected during 1954. Poor remuneration for freight hauled from and to the coast, mostly by private shippers, causes the owners to neglect the maintenance of the vessels to such an extent that they are no longer suitable for service across the Haff or Bodden.

During 1953, the following tonnage of the operable fleet was at various times not available for service:

	First-Quarter Tonnage	Second-Quarter Tonnage	Third-Quarter Tonnage	Fourth-Quarter Tonnage	Average Quarterly Tonnage
Repair	14,111	17,138	10,505	11,614	13,342
Empty for other reasons	99,354	24,198	27,858	32,436	45,964
Total	113,475	41,336	38,363	44,050	59,306

The above listed repairs were mostly minor repairs or repairs performed by the ships' operators themselves. The repairs kept the vessels out of service for an average of 8-10 days. The causes for the listing of "empty for other reasons" were manpower shortage, material shortage, inspections [Revisionen--could also mean auditing or changes], and financial and official matters.

These same causes will occur again in 1954, and the dispatcher groups and special departments must see to it that the resulting number of vessels laid up is kept as low as possible.(2)

Plans to Lower Turnaround Time

Turnaround time of the GDR inland fleet is to be improved by additional training of dispatchers, exchanges of observations and suggestions between the various dispatchers, establishment of a technical school at the Magdeburg [DSU] enterprise for the training of personnel, proper placement of trained dispatchers.

improved communications, day and night navigation, regularly scheduled freight traffic, use of tugs for pushing barges, and an improved system of advance notification to the shippers to expedite loading.

Around mid-1954, an ultrahigh-frequency radio communications system will be installed between various DSU installations. The transmitter will be located in the Mecklenburg inland waterway area. If the system is successful in decreasing the turnaround time of vessels, it will be improved and introduced in other areas.(2)

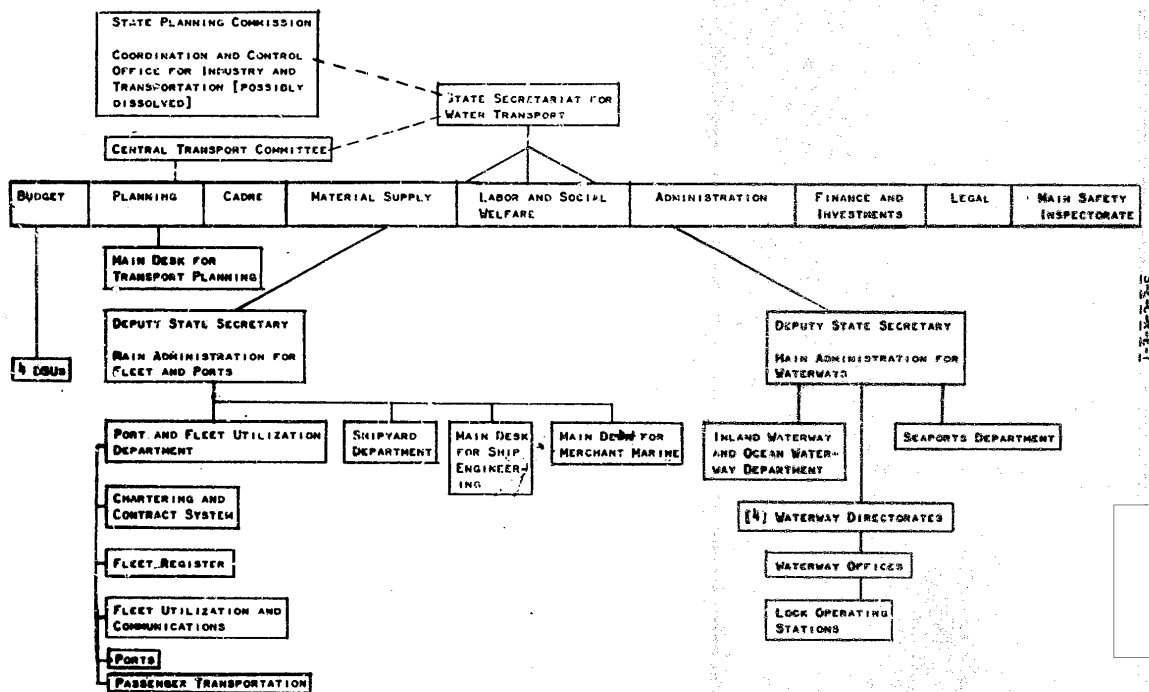
Personnel Problems

The training and retention of personnel is an acute problem of the GDR water-transportation system. The hopeless situation of the private shipowners and the low wages for crew personnel have caused a depletion in the ranks of the water-transport operators. There is currently a shortage of about 60 shipmasters and 200 crewmen. About 30 operable barges are lying idle and about 100 barges which are currently under repairs will not be manned during 1954 because of labor shortage.

In the Berlin, Schoenebeck, and Rathen/Elbe areas, three small technical schools and three to four floating training barges are training about 120 men. During 1954-1955 a navigation school is expected to be built and put in operation on the Stadthafen (City Port) terrain of Magdeburg. It will train 150 apprentices annually in 2-year courses.

By November 1953, the funds for this school had not yet been provided in the 1954 finance plan.(1)

ORGANIZATION OF GDR WATER-TRANSPORT SYSTEM* (1)



*The DSRK is responsible to the Ministry of Labor. [This is probably an error. The DSRK formerly was part of the Ministry of Transportation and later, part of the State Secretariat for Water Transport.]

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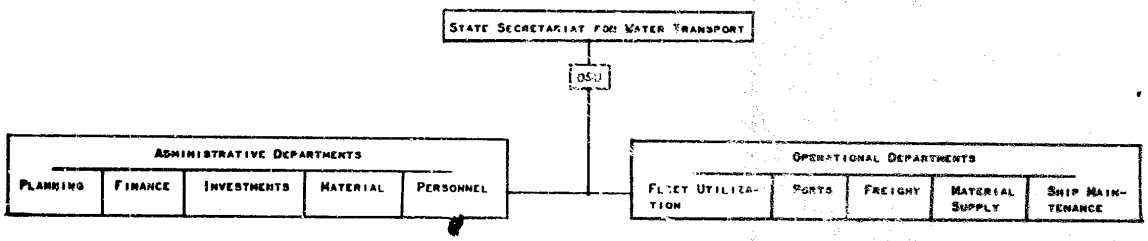
ORGANIZATION OF THE OSUs (1)



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DSU PORTS AND SUBSIDIARY STATIONS*

DSU Berlin	DSU Magdeburg	DSU Stralsund	DSU Dresden
Fuerstenberg/Oder	Boizenburg	Stralsund	For passenger transportation only. Operates the Weisse Flotte (White Fleet), about 20 old steamboats.
Frankfurt/Oder	Doemitz	Greifswald	
Hohensaaten	Wittenberge	Wolgast	
Nieder-Finow	Tangermuende	Anklam	
Koenigswusterhausen	Klein Wittenberg	Demmin	
Ruedersdorf	Torgau	Ueckermuende (1)	
Berlin (except East Port)	Riesa		Dresden (1)
Potsdam	Dresden [for freight only]		Magdeburg
Kotzin	Magdeburg [for freight only]		Halle
Brandenburg	Burg		Saalburg/Saale (3)
Zehdenick	Genthin		
Hennigsdorf	Haldensleben		
Velten	Schoenebeck		
Fuerstenberg/Havel	Calbe		
Neustrelitz	Bernburg		
Waren	Halle-Trotha		
Schwerin	Aken		
Havelberg	Dessau-Wallwitzhafen (1)		
Neuruppin			
Kremmen (1)			

*[For information concerning the facilities, capacities, and other descriptive data of the above ports and subsidiary stations,

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Administrative Data

The Central Transport Committee, shown on the preceding table of organization of the State Secretariat for Water Transport, consists of representatives of the Ministry of Railroads, the State Secretariat of Water Transport, the State Secretariat of Motor Transport and Roads, and the ministries and independent state secretariats which require transportation space regularly. The committee meets on the 17th of each month and tries to reconcile the available and required transportation space. It is self-evident that such a planning system is completely ridiculous, at least for inland water transport, which is subject to unforeseen fluctuations on short notice on the mid-Elbe River and the mid-Oder River. The system, however, has been rigidly followed during the past 5 years, with harmful results, and is the work program of the entire operational water transport medium.

Because the administration of the GDR water-transport system is highly centralized, it requires a corresponding communications system. The entire water-transport organization is, therefore, connected with the automatic dial telephone network of the Reichsbahn. Reports are made daily via telephone from the lower to the higher echelons concerning the shipping space requirements for the following day or for longer periods. Reports are also made about the daily performance and about the fleet to the appropriate office of the particular DSU.

The DSUs maintain a fleet register and prepare two daily operational reports, a fleet report and a loading report. The reports from the various DSUs are consolidated at the state secretariat. The fleet register consists of a file card for every vessel assigned to a port within the particular DSU area. Entries are made daily on the file card about the departure and return of the vessel to or from a neighboring administrative area and dates when vessel is laid up and returns to service.

Financially, the GDR water-transport system can operate profitably only if the water conditions are favorable throughout the entire year. If operations must cease from 3 to 4 months a year because of ice conditions, flood, or low-water levels, or if vessel utilization reaches less than the 40-percent level, as compared with the normal utilization level of 70 percent, the income does not cover the expenditures for wages, fuel, taxes, repairs, and amortization. This applies also to the DSUs where the administrative costs eat up whatever gains are made from favorable hauls. The DSUs have been basing their rates since 1953 on the railroad freight tariff applicable for the shortest railroad route, minus 5 percent. In case of mixed transportation (rail and water or water and rail), the DSU enterprise pays for the transhipping costs, and for the railroad charges. This causes actual deficits in numerous instances. These rates were decreed by the GDR government to divert some of the load from the rails to the waterways, since the former were always overburdened and the latter were not fully utilized. Higher railroad fuel consumption was another motivating factor.

The attempts of crews to defect with their vessels when operating in foreign territory is a continual worry of the occupation power and the GDR government. As a result almost 60 percent of all vessels are prohibited from operating in West Germany or West Berlin. The DSUs, the lock control points, and the waterways border police keep a strict surveillance over GDR vessels not permitted to operate in the West on the basis of exact lists. Those vessels permitted to operate in Western waters are manned by presumably politically reliable crewmen and are people-owned vessels, private shippers who have left behind their families or property as security for their return, or barge trains which have presumably reliable crews in the leading and trailing barge. Despite this, a defection rate of two to five vessels per month has existed for the last few years.(1)

Plans for 1955

The 1955 economic plan calls on the GDR inland fleet to transport 14,970,000 tons of freight. This means that during the navigable period of 11 months [Source 1 counts only 10 months per year as navigable period], a monthly average of 1,360,000 tons of freight must be transported, which, with a trip frequency of 2.7 trips per month per vessel and a 70-percent utilization of the fleet capacity, would require a 720,000-ton fleet. A fleet of only 710,000 tons is available to handle this task. The means that the trip frequency must be increased to 2.8 trips per vessel per month, which would require a fleet of 694,000 tons. This tonnage would be available according to the 1954 plan.

An accurate picture of the 1955 fleet-construction plan is not yet available, because the plans have not been completed as yet, and the DSUs have made their needs only for a self-propelled vessel of the Saale River size. However, contrary to the views of the various enterprises, which do not pay enough attention to the new construction of ships, ships of the Finow River size must also be built in the next few years. Otherwise, the number of this type of vessel will decrease to such an extent that the successful handling of fall traffic will no longer be possible. It must also be pointed out that the majority of these latter vessels are of wooden construction, and their complete reconditioning can no longer be considered economical. The reduction of the Bodden and Haff fleet must also be brought to a halt, lest traffic from and to the coast is impaired.

In planning the new construction of vessels, it might be well to consider the motorization of the fleet, or at least to procure tugs which are especially adapted for pushing.

Plans for 1956

While no plan figures are as yet available for 1956, past experience indicates that about 15 million tons will have to be hauled that year by the inland waterway-transport medium and that the fleet capacity will decrease by 5 percent, or to 675,000 tons.(2)

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